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For Immediate Release
Thursday, March 28, 2002

Grassley Works to Open Chinese Markets for U.S. Agricultural Products

WASHINGTON – Sen. Chuck Grassley, ranking member of the Committee on Finance, today sent the following letter.

March 28, 2002

His Excellency Yang Jiechi
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Embassy of the People's Republic Of China
2300 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.D. 20008

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

I write to express my urgent concern about China's repeated failure to establish long overdue agricultural and fertilizer tariff-rate quotas for 2002. As you know, under the terms of its accession to the World Trade Organization, China was originally required to allocate tariff-rate quotas for agricultural imports on January 1, 2002.

This lengthy delay, combined with a missed deadline for the issuance of certificates on quotas, calls into question China's good faith commitment to timely adherence to its WTO market access obligations.

While China has acknowledged its WTO market access commitments for various agricultural commodities, and has published TRQ regulations for imported grains and oilseeds on February 7, your government has still not allocated the important agricultural and fertilizer TRQs as required.

If these TRQs are not established and allocated in a prompt and transparent manner, access by United States farm and fertilizer producers to China's markets will be impaired. This, of course, would be contrary to China's international trade obligations.

I sincerely hope that China's delay in issuing and allocating agricultural and fertilizer TRQs is not an effort to shield China's own agricultural and fertilizer producers from import competition. I hope and expect that our two countries can engage constructively in the WTO to quickly resolve this matter.

Sincerely,

Chuck Grassley